

Road Committee defines role, duties, makes 2009 plans

Posted Dec. 31, 2008—The North Fork Landowners' Association Road Committee hit the ground running Dec. 12, as it defined its mission and initialized its agenda for 2009, elected a chairperson, and reviewed substantive research that had been prepared for the meeting.

The first order of business in 2009 will be a meeting with Flathead County Public Works Director Dave Prunty regarding dust-abatement and maintenance alternatives for the North Fork Road. (Meeting time, date and location will be posted on this Web site.)

Landowners are urged to e-mail their questions or suggestions to the committee at **northforkroad@live.com**.

To some extent, the January meeting will be a follow-up to a **Nov. 20 dust-mitigation meeting** arranged by outgoing County Commissioner Gary Hall. That meeting was attended by members of the North Fork Road Coalition for Health and Safety, the North Fork Preservation Association and the NFLA.

At the Dec. 12 committee meeting, Betsy Holycross reported that she had located and reviewed several documents pertaining to the road, including the final environmental impact statement prepared in 1983 when paving the road was under consideration, and Flathead County documents dating back as far as 1964.

Mark Heaphy told the committee that Eagle, Alaska—which is served by a gravel road that is heavily traveled by tourists—has received a \$1.3 million grant to treat its road, and he gave the committee the name of an official in the Alaska Department of Transportation from whom further information might be available. Heaphy also told the committee that **Midwest Industrial Supply Inc.** purveys environmentally friendly dust-control compounds.

The Road Committee was established by the NFLA board of directors to address the increasing concerns of North Forkers regarding maintenance of the road, and to mitigate the divisiveness of the North Fork Road issue in general and at NFLA meetings. Specifically the committee's mandate is to:

- Explore dust-abatement and maintenance options and recommend solutions;
- Make relevant information available to the North Fork community;
- Receive and process member suggestions and concerns about the road.

The committee will operate independent of other North Fork advocacy organizations, such as the NFRCHS and NFPA. It will not take substantive action without board approval. However, the committee is authorized to perform research, meet with officials and gather information in other ways. NFLA President Molly Shepherd hopes that over time, with a pragmatic, non-ideological approach, the committee can build some community consensus on road issues.

Committee members are Chairperson Holycross; Steve Berg, deputy chair; Margaret Heaphy; Ed Heger; Steve Weber. The committee's dedicated e-mail address is **northforkroad@live.com**.

For Shepherd's complete summary of the Dec. 12 Road Committee meeting, **click here**. For more about the committee, see the **October 2008 Meeting Minutes**.